

Claim Status

1. (Currently Amended) Apparatus for applying surgical fixation devices, the apparatus comprising device inserting means [[(12)]] which includes guide means in the form of a passage [[(14)]] along which a surgical device is movable, the passage [[(14)]] comprising in use distal and proximal ends ~~inner (16) and outer ends (22)~~; and a supply means ~~(46, 48, 50, 58, 66)~~ including means [[(54, 72)]] for holding one or more surgical devices, the supply means being movably mounted to the proximal end of the guide means ~~(46, 48, 50, 58, 66) being moveable relative to the inserting means (21)~~ such that in a first condition the supply means ~~(46, 48, 50, 58, 66)~~ is aligned with the ~~passage outer end (22)~~ passage proximal end such that a surgical device held by the holder means [[(54, 72)]] is moveable into the passage [[(14)]], and in a second condition free access is allowed to the ~~outer end (22)~~ proximal end for the insertion of a surgical tool through the passage, the apparatus also comprising a separate pushing means engageable with a surgical device in the passage to push the device therealong, with the distal end of the pushing means contoured to engage with a surgical device.
2. (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to claim 1 characterised in that the supply means [[(46, 48, 50, 58, 66)]] is releasably mountable on the inserting means [[(12)]].
3. (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to claim 1 characterised in that the supply means [[(46, 48, 50, 58, 66)]] is movably mountable on the inserting means [[(12)]].
4. (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to claim 3 characterised in that the supply means [[(46, 48, 50, 58)]] is rotatably mounted on the inserting means [[(12)]].
5. (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to claim 3 characterised in that the supply means [[(66)]] is slidably mountable on the inserting means [[(12)]].
6. (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to claim 1 characterised in that the inserting means [[(12)]] comprises a support member [[(20, 64)]].
7. (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to claim 6 characterised in that the support member [[(20, 64)]] is manually engageable by a user.

8. (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to claim 6 characterised in that the support member $[(20, 64)]$ is provided at or adjacent the passage proximal end. ~~distal end (22)~~.

9.(Currently Amended) An apparatus according to $[[\text{any of}]]$ claim 6 characterised in that the supply means ~~(46, 48, 50, 58, 66)~~ is mountable on the support member $[(20, 64)]$.

10.(Currently Amended) An apparatus according to $[[\text{any of}]]$ claim 6 characterised in that the passage $[(14)]$ extends through the support member $[(20, 64)]$.

11.(Currently Amended) An apparatus according to claim 1 characterised in that the distal end ~~proximal end (16)~~ of the passage $[(14)]$ is shaped to aid positioning.

12. (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to claim 11 characterised in that ~~the inner end (16)~~ distal end of the passage $[(14)]$ comprises one or more pointed parts $[(18)]$.

13.(Currently Amended) An apparatus according to $[[\text{any of}]]$ claim 6 characterised in that the support member $[(20)]$ includes a pivot pin $[(26)]$ upon which the supply means ~~(46, 48, 50, 58)~~ is pivotally mountable.

14. (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to claim 13 characterised in that the supply means ~~(46, 48, 50, 58)~~ is pivotally mountable about a hole $[(52)]$ in the supply means ~~(46, 48, 50, 58)~~.

15.(Currently Amended) An apparatus according to any of claim 6 characterised in that the support member $[(20, 64)]$ is generally in the form of a disc.

16.(Currently Amended) An apparatus according to claim $[[15]]$ 13 characterised in that the support member is generally in the form of a disc, and the $[[a]]$ pivot pin $[(26)]$ is spaced from the disc axis.

17.(Currently Amended) An apparatus according to claim 10 characterised in that the supply means ~~(46, 48, 50, 58, 66)~~ is mountable on the support member $[(20, 64)]$ so as to at least generally overlie the outer end $[(22)]$ of the passage $[(14)]$.

18. (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to claim 1 characterised in that the holding means comprises one or more first holes ~~[[54,72]]~~.

19. (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to claim 18 characterised in that a surgical device is wholly locatable in the first hole or holes ~~[[54, 72]]~~ with the or each first hold ~~[[54,72]]~~ selectively alignable with the outer end ~~[(22)]~~ of the passage ~~[(14)]~~ to permit transfer of the device into the passage ~~[(14)]~~.

20.(Currently Amended) An apparatus according to claim 18 characterised in that a plurality of first holes ~~[(54)]~~ are provided in the supply means ~~(46, 48, 50, 58, 66)~~.

21. (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to claim 18 characterised in that the first hole or holes ~~[(54)]~~ has substantially the same diameter as the internal diameter of the passage ~~[(14)]~~.

22.(Currently Amended) An apparatus according to claim 4 characterised in that the supply means comprises a disc ~~[(46,48,50,58)]~~.

23. (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to claim 4 characterised in that the supply means ~~[(46, 48, 50, 58)]~~ is shaped to facilitate manual turning thereof.

24. (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to claim 23 characterised in that the supply means ~~[(58)]~~ comprises a plurality of lobes ~~[(62)]~~ surrounding an axis.

25. (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to claim 24 characterised in that a first hole ~~[(54)]~~ is provided in at least some of the lobes ~~[(62)]~~.

26. (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to claim 24 characterised in that at least some of the lobes ~~[(62)]~~ are spaced apart to define recesses ~~[(56)]~~ therebetween.

27. (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to claim 1 characterised in that one or more second holes ~~[[and/or]]~~ or recesses ~~[(56)]~~ are provided in the supply means ~~[(46, 48, 50,~~

58)]] through which second hole or holes or recesses [[[56)]] free access is provided to the [[outer]] proximal end [[[22)]] of the passage [[[14)]]].

28. (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to claim 6 [[claim 5]] characterised in that the supply means [[[66)]] is slidably mountable on the support member [[[64)]]].

29. (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to claim 28 characterised in that the support member [[[64)]] comprises a track [[[70)]] along which the supply means [[[66)]] is slidable.

30. (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to claim 1 characterised in that the apparatus comprises a pushing means wherein said pushing means comprises an elongate member. (28), engageable with a surgical device in the passage (14) to push the device therealong.

31. (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to claim 30 characterised in that the ~~pushing means (28) comprises an~~ elongate member [[[30)]] slidingly fits through the passage.

32. (Cancelled)

33. (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to [[claim 31]] claim 30 characterised in that the elongate member (30) has a handle part (34) on one end.

34. (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to [[claim 31]] claim 30 characterised in that the elongate member [[[30)]] is flexible.

35. (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to [[claim 30]] claim 1 characterised in that the end [[[32)]] of the pushing means [[[28)]] engageable with a surgical device is [[contoured]] concave.

36. (Cancelled)

37. (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to claim 1 characterised in that the ~~[[apparatus comprises]]~~ surgical tool is an incision means ~~[[(36)]]~~ extendible through the passage ~~[[(14)]]~~ for creating an incision.

38. (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to ~~[[claim 37]]~~ claim 35 characterised in that the incision means ~~[[(36)]]~~ comprises an elongate member ~~[[(38)]]~~, with an incision formation ~~[[(44)]]~~ at one end ~~[[(42)]]~~.

39. (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to claim 38 characterised in that the elongate member ~~[[(38)]]~~ has a handle ~~[[(40)]]~~ at the opposite end to the incision formation ~~[[(44)]]~~.

40. (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to claim 38 characterised in that the elongate member ~~[[(38)]]~~ is flexible.

41. (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to claim 1 characterised in that the supply means ~~(46, 48, 50, 58, 66)~~ has one or more surgical devices held thereon.

42. (Currently Amended) A method of applying a surgical device into a body, the body ~~characterised in that the method comprises using apparatus according to claim 1 comprising~~ locating a surgical device in an apparatus according to claim 1, moving the supply means such that the surgical device is aligned with the passage distal end, engaging the distal end of the pushing means with the surgical device, and pushing the surgical device with the pushing means along the passage into the body.

43. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 42 characterised in that the surgical device is located in the supply means ~~[[(46, 48, 50, 58, 66)]]~~ before the latter is mounted on the inserting means ~~[[(21)]]~~.

44. (Currently Amended) A method according to claims ~~[[42 or 43]]~~ 40 characterised in that a plurality of surgical devices are mounted on the supply means ~~[[(46, 48, 50, 58, 66)]]~~.

45. (Currently Amended) A method according to ~~[[claim 43]]~~ claim 40 characterised in that the surgical tool is an incision means, and an incision is initially made in the body using the incision

means extending through the guide means. a plurality of surgical devices are mounted on the supply means (46, 48, 50, 58, 66).

46. (Currently Amended) A method according to [[any of]] claim [[42]] 45 ~~when dependent on any of claims 37 to 40 characterised in that whilst the~~ [[an]] incision means extends through the guide means, the holding means is arranged such that a second hole or recess therein overlies ~~is initially made in the body using the incision means (36) extending through the guide means~~ [[(14)]].

47. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 46 characterised in that the incision means [[(36)]] freely extends through said second hole or recess [[(56)]].

48. (Currently Amended) A method to any of claim 45 [[to 47]] characterised in that following incision, the incision means [[(36)]] is removed.

49. (Currently Amended) A method according to ~~any of claims 46 to~~ claim 48 characterised in that following removal of the incision means the supply means is moved until a surgical device held therein overlies the guide means, ~~the incision means (36) is removed.~~

50. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 49 characterised in that the device is subsequently urged into the guide means [[(14)]] and therealong subsequently into the body using a pushing means ~~(28) according to any of claims 30 to 36.~~

51. (Cancelled)

52. (New) Apparatus for applying surgical fixation devices, the apparatus comprising device inserter which includes a guide in the form of a passage along which a surgical device is movable; the passage includes a distal end and a proximal end; and a supply including a holder for holding one or more surgical devices, the supply being movably mounted to the proximal end of the guide such that in a first condition the supply is aligned with passage proximal end such that a surgical device being held by the holder is moveable into the passage, and in a second condition free access is allowed to the proximal end for the insertion of a surgical tool through the passage, an incision member is provided and is movable in said passage for providing an incision, the

apparatus also comprising a separate pusher engageable with a surgical device in the passage to push the device through the passage, into the incision to a desired fixation location within a body, wherein the distal end of the pusher is contoured to engage a surgical device.